

do, we are in duty bound to make to society a contribution which no legal definition can measure.

Those who attempt to construct the world without reference to the spiritual forces which are at work defend altruism on the ground that it is an enlightened self-interest; they contend that the doing of good to others, even sacrificing for others, yields a reward in pleasure. The difficulty about the philosophy that rests upon such calculations is, first, that it is impossible for one to look far enough ahead to form any accurate opinion as to the time or manner in which the reward is to come, and second, that time spent in calculation can better be spent in acting. The person who attempts to keep a book account of the good he does, does not, as a rule, do enough good to justify an entry in the book; the spirit that leads him to keep the account continually hampers him in his work. Life is made up of an innumerable number of small acts, not considered worth doing by those who are guided by selfish considerations. Of the countless millions of kind and generous acts done, but few would have been done had it been necessary to reason out just in what way the bread "cast upon the waters" would return.

The spring is the best illustration of a life conforming to the Christian ideal. As the spring pours forth constantly of that which refreshes and invigorates, seeking nothing in return, and asking not who is to be the recipient of its bounty, so a life consecrated to a noble purpose pours forth a constant flood of helpfulness; and man is as little able to follow through succeeding generations the good that he does as the spring is to trace the refreshing influence of its waters.

I have dwelt at length upon the ideal because it is of transcendent importance both to the individual and to those about him. Whether life is a success or not depends far more upon the moral purpose than it does upon the health or mental strength of the individual. History is replete with instances where men and women have accomplished much in spite of great physical infirmity. Helpless cripples and persons deformed have sometimes won a fame denied to athletes and to gladiators; sightless eyes have often beheld spiritual beauties which multitudes have failed to find; the bed of the invalid has sometimes been a throne from which have flown blessings greater than a monarch can bestow. Not only has a high purpose overcome physical obstacles, but it has often made up for the lack of educational advantages. In innumerable cases an uneducated person, inspired by love for a great cause and filled with zeal, has surpassed those far better equipped, but lacking a compelling purpose.

If I were gifted with the power to penetrate the future and could discern the careers which lie before the graduates of this day, I would doubtless note a wide difference in accomplishments. Making allowance for different standards of measurement, some will be more successful than others; some will surprise their friends by the progress which they make, others may prove a disappointment, and the ideal which today lies within each heart, or may hereafter be planted there, will have more to do in explaining the success or failure than the studies that have been pursued here—more than any health report would indicate.

In the Memorabilia of Socrates you will find an interesting description of the choice of Hercules. The great philosopher quotes another Greek in substance as follows:

"When Hercules was advancing toward the period when the young begin to give intimations whether they will enter life by the path of virtue or by that of vice, he went forth into a solitary place and sat down perplexed as to which of these two paths he would pursue. Two maidens appeared before him, one in gaudy attire and with froward manner said: 'Hercules, if you will follow the path that I point out you shall taste of every species of pleasure, and lead a life free from every sort of trouble. Your whole time will be occupied in considering what meat or drink will please you, and what will most delight you.' Hercules asked her name, and she replied: 'My friends call me Happiness but those who hate me give me to my disparagement the name of Vice.'

"The other maiden, more reserved in manner and more modest in demeanor said to him: 'Hercules, I shall not deceive you. The path that I point out is full of labors, full of trials, full of difficulties, but it is the path that leads to immortality. If you seek to be beloved by your friends, you must serve your friends. If you desire to be honored by any city, you must benefit that city; if you wish to be admired by all Greece for your merit you must endeavor to be

of service to all Greece.' And her name was Virtue."

That which is told in story by the ancient philosopher is set forth in the form of an injunction by the Master, for when his disciples asked who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven he answered: "Let him who would be chiefest among you be the servant of all." Thus, if we seek authority from history—whether profane or sacred—we find that he is the greatest who does the most of good. This is the law from which there is no appeal—a law confirmed by all experience, a law proved by the inscriptions upon the monuments reared by grateful hands to those whom the world calls great.

And what an opportunity for service this age presents! If I had my choice of all the ages in which to live, I would choose the present above all others. The ocean steamer and the railway train bring all the corners of the earth close together, while the telegraph—wire and wireless—gives wings to the news and makes the events of each day known in every land during the following night. The printing press has popularized knowledge and made it possible for each one who desires it to possess a key to the libraries of the world. Invention has multiplied the strength of the human arm and brought within the reach of the masses comforts which, until recently, even wealth could not buy. The word "neighborhood" no longer describes a community; that "all ye are brethren" can be more readily comprehended than ever before. It is easier for one to distribute blessings to the world today than it was a few centuries ago to be helpful to the residents of a single valley. A good example set anywhere can be seen everywhere, so intimate has become the relation between man and man.

And yet with the wonderful spread of knowledge and the marvellous range of achievement there is vast work to be done. Conscience has not kept pace with commerce, nor has moral growth increased with the growth of wealth. The extremes of society have been driven farther and farther apart, and the chord of sympathy between rich and poor is greatly strained. Destitution and squalor lurk in the shadow of palaces, and great law-breakers vie with petty thieves in ignoring the statutes of the state. The instrumentalities of government are being used for public plunder, and those who make fortunes through legislation employ a title of their winnings for the corruption of the sources of public opinion. Not only is a bribe dangled before the eyes of the indigent voter, but those who profit through the control of the government do not hesitate to subsidize newspapers and to scatter their hush money wherever a protest can be silenced.

The opportunity is here and the field inviting. A great orator complained a generation ago that the scholar in the republic was not doing the work for which his education fitted him. He declared that the great truths relating to society were not the result of scholarly meditation, but had been first heard in the solemn protest of martyred patriotism and the loud cries of crushed and starving labor—that the scholars, instead of making history, were content to write it "one-half truly and the other half as their prejudices blur and distort it."

Let not this reproach be truthfully uttered against the scholars of America today. With a soil capable of supporting a vast population, with a climate that gives infinite variety and furnishes healing for every ill; with a people commingling the best blood of all the races and a government which furnishes the greatest stimulus to high endeavor—here the scholar ought to find the most powerful incentive and be inspired to the most heroic effort. Whether he turns his attention to the improvement of crops and herds, to mechanical labor, to the perfecting of methods of exchange, or to the cheapening of transportation, or ministers as a physician to the ills of the body, or as an instructor to the wants of the mind, or as a religious teacher to the needs of the heart, no matter to what he devotes himself, infinite possibilities are before him. In whatever walk of life he takes his place he cannot shirk the duties of citizenship, for, living in a land where every citizen is a sovereign and where no one dares to wear a crown, he must help to make the government good or share the blame for permitting evils that might be corrected.

If we apply the term coward to one who, from fear of bodily harm, falters upon the battlefield, we must find some harsher term to apply to those who ignominiously withdraw themselves from the struggle of today, in the presence of the tremendous problems which require for their wise solution all the energies of the body, all the powers of the mind and all the virtues of the heart.

Members of the graduating class: I have

endeavored to impress upon your minds and hearts, first, the possibilities for good or evil of a human being, and, second, the responsibility which great opportunity imposes upon him. I have endeavored to suggest the relation which should exist between body and mind and heart. I have endeavored to emphasize the paramount importance of the moral element. Your labors are not ended, but begun. You are not going into undisturbed retirement, but into the nation's busy, throbbing life. You have been "burning the midnight oil;" henceforth you stand in the sunlight. Fear not to mingle with the poor and the unlearned; they need you most. You will find among them the homely virtues, and you will find among them honest inquiry, for it was not in speaking of such that it was said: "The cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the truth."

Strive to make your lives resemble a purifying stream, remembering that the higher the reservoir from which you draw the greater will be the pressure. Let not happiness be the aim of your lives, for happiness eludes those who most eagerly pursue it, but comes unbidden into the homes of those who labor for higher ends.

Beware of selfishness, for selfishness defeats itself. "He that findeth his life shall lose it," is true in other than a religious sense, while he who surrenders himself unreservedly to some great cause gains a larger life than the one surrendered. Wendell Phillips gives fitting expression to this truth when he says, "How prudently most men sink into nameless graves, while now and then a few forget themselves into immortality."

I have endeavored to suggest an ideal which may be helpful to you when the festivities of this closing week are past and you turn to the sober work of life. No ideal is a sufficient one that will not satisfy us in our declining years as well as in the days of youth and the days of maturity. Aye, more, no ideal is all that it should be unless it is so lofty as to be visible from both sides of the river that separates the temporal life from the life that is eternal. Be not discouraged because you strive for that which cannot be wholly attained. The ideal is only ideal because it is beyond our reach, and yet it may guide us as the polar star guides the mariner upon the open sea. If perfection is not possible to us, neither is it required of us. When we have done our full duty our consciences will acquit us, and our friends will not condemn. "We work in the real, but we live in the ideal," some one has said, and yet the ideal is the most real thing that we know, as all can testify.

Ask the mother who holds in her arms her boy, what her ideal is concerning him and she will tell you that she desires that his heart may be so pure that it could be laid upon a pillow and not leave a stain; that his ambition may be so holy that it could be whispered in an angel's ear; and that his life may be so clean that his mother, his sister, his wife, his child could read a record of its every thought and act without a blush. But ask her if she will require this perfection in her son before she showers her love upon him, and she will answer "No." She will tell you that she will make him as good as she can; that she will follow his footsteps with a daily prayer; that in whatever land he wanders her blessing will abide with him; and that when he dies she'll hope, hope, yet, hope that the world will be better that he has lived. This is all that she can do. All that any of us can do for ourselves or for others is the best that opportunity and circumstances permit.

The development of the individual is never complete. Solomon describes the path of the just as "like the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day," and Holland, putting the same into verse, says:

"Heaven is not gained by a single bound.  
We build the ladder by which we rise  
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,  
And mount to its summit round by round."

So, with the work of government and the work of civilization. We find an unfinished work when we arrive; we leave the work unfinished when we are called hence. Each day marks out our duty for us, and it is for us to devote ourselves to it, whatever it may be, with high purpose and unfaltering courage. Whether we live to enjoy the fruits of our efforts or lay down the work before the victory is won, we know that every well-spoken word has its influence; that no good deed is ever lost. And we know, also, that no one can count his life on earth as spent in vain, if when he departs, it can be said: "The night is darker because his light has gone out; the world is not so warm because his heart has grown cold in death."